



KEET SEEL HIKING INFORMATION – Summer 2009

The Route: Keet Seel is one of the best preserved ancestral pueblo villages in the Southwest. It is located 8.5 miles from the Visitor Center. The hike is rugged, strenuous and the trail is marked by mile post spaced about every 1 to ½ mile. The trail drops sharply (1000 feet) (305 M) from the canyon rim to the canyon floor on rocky switchbacks and sand dunes. Once in the canyon, the route then follows shallow streams and gradually rises 400 feet (125 M) over the last 5.5 miles (9 KM) of the trail. Walking through water is unavoidable so plan on getting your feet wet. The final two miles cross several deep sandy gullies. Allow at least 4-6 hours hiking time each way, an hour to rest and have lunch, and about one hour to tour Keet Seel. Site tours normally start around 9:30am and are conducted throughout the day as people arrive. Plan your departure accordingly. Slow hikers often start on the trail at sunrise.

Keet Seel Site: Upon arrival at Keet Seel, contact the Ranger to arrange a tour time, and if the Ranger is giving a tour or on patrol, please wait at the picnic area. No more than five people may tour Keet Seel at any time, in order to minimize impact to the fragile site. Larger groups will split up and wait their turn; one group will tour while the other group takes lunch. Day hikers have first priority in order to return within the day. Do not enter the ruins without the Ranger. Wandering and exploring beyond the monument boundary on Navajo Nation lands is not permitted without a Navajo Nation backcountry permit. Wear sports sandals, tennis shoes, hiking shoes with non-aggressive treads while on the Keet Seel site tour will greatly lessen impacts to the fragile ruins.

Reservations: Keet Seel will open from May 23, 2009 to September 12, 2009. Reservations for backcountry permits should be made by telephone **928-672-2700** or in person. Reservations may be made no more than 5 months in advance of the desired visit. Organized groups (tour groups, scouts, etc.) are limited to 10 persons per day. Reservations are limited to 20 people per day. We do not accept reservations via fax. Call to confirm your permit no later than one week (7 calendar days) before your visit or your reservation will be cancelled and given to others waiting for a permit. Please notify us if you or your entire group cancels, so others may go.

For the summer season 2009 Keet Seel will be available on the following week days and weekends:

- Tuesdays and Wednesdays Keet Seel tours will be unavailable do not make reservations on these days.
- Thursdays thru Mondays Keet Seel tours will be available and make reservations on these days.

If the date you want is already filled, you may call back six days prior to the desired date. By then, openings may be available from un-confirmed reservations. For these, we accept reservations on a first-call first-served basis. We do not maintain a waiting list. Occasionally Keet Seel permits can be obtained on the day of the tour if openings are still available, or if those with confirmed reservations fail to arrive by 9:00am.

Permits: There is a Keet Seel trail orientation held at the Visitor Center, at either 4:00 p.m. the day before your scheduled tour, or at 8:15 a.m. on the day of your hike. The orientation is required for a permit. The permit allows you to travel across Navajo Nation land to Keet Seel. It does not allow you to deviate from the designated trail. Hiking off the main trail is not allowed without a Navajo Nation backcountry permit. Please respect the homes, property, and privacy of canyon residents.

Camping: The 17 mile (27.4 km) roundtrip distance to and from Keet Seel can be completed in a one day only by those in very good physical condition. Most hikers choose to camp overnight at the primitive campground located along the trail, ¼ mile before Keet Seel. Your permit allows camping for one night only. Composting toilets are available. Wood fires are not permitted. Please pack out all trash. Visitors should camp only in designated areas and away from canyon walls to avoid injury from a rock fall. Safe drinking water is not available. Carry in all your water (1 gallon per person, minimum, round-trip).

Recommendations: Appropriate gear items include the following:

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| * 1 gallon of water per person per day | * Sturdy hiking boots |
| * High energy food | * Hat, Rain gear |
| * Ground tarp or lightweight tent | * Lightweight long sleeve shirt |
| * Fleece jacket/Gore- Tex shell | * Long pants |
| * Cook stove | * Flashlights |
| * Trash bag | * First aid kit |
| * Wool socks and extra socks | * Sport sandals or tennis shoes (non-aggressive treads,
you may be crossing the stream many times) |

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS:

Do not drink from the stream! Cattle and other animal feces contaminate surface water. Water filters do not remove microscopic organisms that transmit virus or other illness.

Watch for flash floods: Violent thunderstorms are common from July to September. Wait on higher ground for water to subside. Do not attempt to cross creeks during flash floods!

Be cautious of quicksand: Quicksand develops around large stream boulders after high waters, and around springs.

Avoid overheating: Midday temperatures in the canyon bottom range 10° +F more than surrounding mesa tops and can approach 100° F. To avoid excessive exposure, hike early morning, wear a hat, seek shade, and drench your clothing with water.

Avoid hypothermia: Body temperature can drop to fatal levels during exposure to rainy weather, wind or wet clothing. Temperatures at midday can drop as much as 25° F (13C) during thunderstorms. Wearing a Gore- Tex over shell or proper rain gear will help prevent hypothermia during rain.

Be alert for rock fall: The soft sandstone is constantly eroding and falling from canyon walls and inside alcoves. Set camp and picnic only in areas away from cliffs.

Watch out for collapsing dirt banks along creeks and gullies: Stay back from the edge of embankments. Embankments are unstable and can give away without warning.

Search & Rescue: This is a remote and sparsely populated area. Help may take hours or most of a day to reach someone. Do not approach wild animals and domestic livestock. Night problems may have to wait until morning for assistance. Cell phones rarely work in the canyons. Stay safe.

Time Difference: From March 8 until November 1, 2009, the Navajo Nation, including Navajo National Monument is on Mountain Daylight Savings Time (MDT). This is one hour ahead of all other Arizona locations including Flagstaff, Grand Canyon, Hopi Nation, and Phoenix. Navajo National Monument and the Navajo Nation are on the same time as Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico during this period.